

Abundance and run timing of adult salmon in the Henshaw Creek, Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska 2002

Abstract: A resistance board weir was operated between June 29 and August 2, 2002, to estimate escapement numbers and collect biological data from adult salmon returning to Henshaw Creek, a tributary of the Koyukuk River in north-central Alaska. This was the third year of a multi-year project to study Chinook *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha* and summer chum *O. keta* salmon populations. A total of 649 Chinook salmon and 25,249 summer chum salmon passed through the weir. The median date of passage for Chinook salmon was July 14, 2002. The Chinook run was composed of 34% females. The age distribution was predominately age 1.3 (36%) and age 1.4 (31%) fish. The average female Chinook length was 820 mm with a range from 540 mm to 975 mm. The average male Chinook length was 637 mm with a range from 410 mm to 950 mm. The median date of passage for summer chum salmon was July 15, 2002. The summer chum salmon run was composed of 60% females. The age distribution was predominately age 0.4 (81%) fish. The average female summer chum salmon length was 556 mm with a range from 450 mm to 635 mm. The average male summer chum salmon length was 592 mm with a range from 515 mm to 805 mm. Four resident species were recorded migrating through the weir; longnose sucker *Catostomus catostomus* (N=3,125), Arctic grayling *Thymallus arcticus* (N=142), whitefish *Coregonus spp.* (N=8), and northern pike *Esox lucius* (N=1). Chinook and summer chum salmon escapement counts from Henshaw Creek may assist managers in making decisions during in-season run activity with the intent to provide post season evaluation of various management practices and potentially assisting in developing future run projections. Information collected from this study will also be used to compare the Chinook and summer chum salmon runs with other studies on the Koyukuk River.

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